

POEMS
OF
HENRIETTA A. HUXLEY

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WITH THREE OF
THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY



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TO MY BELOVED CHILDREN
AND
TO THE MEMORY OF
THEIR FATHER

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FROM SHANKLIN

March 1, 1857

DEAR wife, for more than thirty years
Have you and I, hand clasped in hand,
Sometimes all smiles, sometimes in bitter tears,
Wended our way through the strange land
Of living men; until with silvering hair,
And graver mien and steps more slow,
Adown the strand of age we fare
To the still ocean, out beyond time's flow.

True wife, housemother, worn with many cares,
Love's afterglow shall brighten all the years
That yet are ours; and closer still shall be our clasp
Of hands, until they nerveless fall and cease to grasp.

T. H. HUXLEY.

ALTR' ARNO, FLORENCE

IN VIEW OF MICHAEL ANGELO'S DAVID AND
GALILEO'S TOWER

March 5, 1885

"**T**HY servant slew the lion and the bear,
Wherefore, O king, he will in no wise fear
The great sword, or the weaver's beam-like spear,
Of this uncircumcised Philistine."

So spake young David, girlish white and red
His beardless cheeks; and from the streamlet's bed
A pebble took, and slung it at the head
Of the blasphemer, big-limbed, brazen-clad.
Aimed deftly and well sped, the hurtling stone
Went straight and sharply through the thick skull
bone:

Clanged helm and shield as huge Goliath fell,
While his dull soul sank homeward down to hell.

O Tuscan! that eke smote thy Philistine,
Thy sons fight ever for the cause divine!

T. H. HUXLEY

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

October 12, 1892

"Gib diesen Todten mir heranz."—Don Carlos.

BRING me my dead!
To me that have grown
Stone laid upon stone,
As the stormy brood
Of English blood
Has waxed and spread
And filled the world,
With sails unfurled;
With men that may not lie;
With thoughts that cannot die.

Bring me my dead!
Into the storied hall,
Where I have garnered all
My harvest without weed;
My chosen fruits of seed;
And lay him gently down among

The men of state, the men of song;
The men that would not suffer wrong;
The thought-worn chieftains of the mind;
Head servants of the human kind.

Bring me my dead!
The autumn sun shall shed
Its beams athwart the bier's
Heaped blooms; a many tears
Shall flow; his words, in cadence sweet and
 strong,
Shall voice the full hearts of the silent throng.
Bring me my dead!

And oh ! sad wedded mourner, seeking still
For vanished hand-clasp; drinking in thy fill
Of holy grief: forgive, that pious theft
Robs thee of all, save memories, left:
Not thine to kneel beside the grassy mound
While dies the western glow; and all around
Is silence; and the shadows closer creep
And whisper softly: All must fall asleep.

T. H. HUXLEY.

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

THE heavens are thick with stars,
That blink with loving eyes,
And thro' the ship's tall spars
I see the moon arise.

Darkly the waters rush
In never-ending maze,
Save where a golden flush
The moon's soft gaze betrays.

I am going to those I love,
I cannot but be glad,
Yet lingering memories move
My heart to feelings sad.

In golden letters gleaming
I read my life-long loss,
On the far horizon beaming,
In the stars of the Southern Cross.

To-night will the cross disappear,
Would it betokened of strife
That my path were henceforth clear,
The cross blotted out of my life.

I cannot but look, and still
Think of those it shineth o'er ;
I am taking my soul's deep fill,
Those stars I shall never see more.

They point to a southern track,
To the land I have trod for years,
If I could I would not go back,
Yet my eyes are blind with tears.

Trouble, and pain, and pleasure,
In that southern land I knew ;
That of grief I'd a double measure
Is indeed too sadly true.

Yet not for worlds would I
"Loose the fountains Time has sealed,"
In the darkness let them lie,
Till they well in a pleasanter field.

I will not look South any longer,
But I will look to the North,
The hope of the future is stronger
Than any that's yet gone forth.

As the flowers absorb the cloud,
As the sand drinks in the sea,
So all my feelings crowd
To a joy that awaiteth me.

Seeking one who is dearer far
Than any I count in my loss,
Be my beacon, the North Pole star,
Oh my soul! take thy leave of the Cross.

THE POSY

"I'VE gathered a posy for you,
Sweetheart, and what think you I chose?"
"Oh, pansies, forget-me-nots blue,
Mignonette, and my favourite rose."

"No, wide of the truth is your guess,
Quite others the flowerets three
My love and my hope may confess,
Look up, love, and listen to me.

"I'll love thee, says sweet heliotrope;
Potato bloom, toil for thy life;
Whilst the blossom of orange, dear hope,
Shall whisper, I'll make thee my wife."

NOTE.—Potato bloom, heliotrope, and orange blossom were the flowers given to me in a posy by my future husband when we were engaged, and thus interpreted by him

THE CONTRAST

HOW hushed it is! How very still,
That e'en the pulses in my ears
With loud and strong determined will
Beat time unto my coward fears.

The long dull day is nearly gone,
The air is chill with heavy rain,
And gloomy clouds, as night comes on,
Forgather. Nature wears a stain.

Ah me! It was the same last night,
And yet not such the gloomy view
I took of things, for then my sight
Saw different, if it saw not true.

Then sank the quiet on my soul,
Sweetly as slumber after pain,
Fair were the clouds, I could extol
The freshness of the falling rain.

And would you know the difference
Betwixt this eve and yesterday,
That so have changed my every sense,
And hued all things in sober grey ?

It is—that he's away to-night,
Friend, lover, husband, all in one,
Who makes this home a place of light:
Ah me! 'tis dark without the sun.

A PICTURE

BOOK in hand, he silent sitteth,
He the rapt philosopher,
And his dark-lined brows he knitteth
As the hot thoughts stir.

In the furnace fierce of thought
Doth he aye fact's rough ore fuse,
Till to shape artistic wrought
Fair to see 'tis good to use.

His pursuits in Nature centre,
Bones and fossils round him piled;
Who would into heaven enter
Must be as a little child.

In the simplest things perceiving
Basis for some truth sublime,
From creation's fair threads weaving
Hangings for the halls of Time:

That shall tell the Heaven-taught story,
Talents five improved to ten,
Kindling love for God's true glory
'Mong the untutored sons of men.

CINDERELLA

SHE was the last of sisters three,
Fair, golden-haired, a merry maid,
Blue eyes with glints of fun had she,
That honest looked up undismayed.

She toiled, she suffered, but yet sang
The song of faith within her breast.
Hope's clarion cry inspiring rang
From cloudland heights and kept her blest.

And tho' her path was cinder strewn,
Her looks were bright, her laugh was glee,
And oft she said, "Or late or soon
I know the Prince will come for me."

She journeyed to a distant land,
With waters blue, and sunshine bright,
Where lofty columned palm-trees stand,
And moonbeams make a day of night.

Twelve moons had waned, there came a youth
Fate wafted to this self-same shore,
A princely soul who sought for truth
And honour too—but truth still more.

Then destiny her cunning net
Drew round the youth and maiden fair;
All in the merry dance they met,
And there love bound them unaware.

For looking into her blue eyes,
The life-love kindled in his soul,
She yielding with a glad surprise
To that sweet dream that o'er her stole.

Love's fairy dream, that all came true,
And she was blest, and so was he.
She laughed and said, "I always knew
Some day the Prince would come for me."

And so she prophesied his fate—
There came a time, a distant day,
He blew the horn and stormed the gate,
And slew the giants in his way.

THE OLIVE-TREE

O OLIVE-TREE! with grey-green leaves,
That shimmer silver as they dance
Unto the west wind, from the caves
Of snow-capped mountains, like the glance
Of him I love, a loyal knight,
Methinks thy counterpart is he,
Rooted to earth, but crowned with light
And staunch as thou, grey olive-tree.

Thy stubborn branches image me
The independent mind that goes
Its own way on, though flattery
Of the world's charm-charged sunshine flows;
Tho' gnarled by age, heart cleft, one thing
Will hold his memory green, for he
Shall to the scattered nations bring
Rich fruits like thee, grey olive-tree!

O lover mine! be true to me
In youth, in age, whatever weaves
The weaver Life, for us to wear!
Be like this grey-green olive-tree.
I look, they wave those silvery leaves,
I wake from dreaming by the sea;
Thou *hast been* as this olive-tree,
And now, its silver's in thy hair.

TO MY HUSBAND

DEAREST and best! we both begin to feel
The weight of years lie heavy on our lives,
A little slower turns our pulses' wheel,
And in thy hair shines many a silver thread;
But this, Beloved, this one thing I know,
That our true love doth show no tint of grey,
But is as golden as that far-off day
In the long past, when soul with soul did wed,
And all the world was roseate with their glow.

ON THE TERRACE

HERE in the sunset glow,
Shed from the western hill,
On the terrace, to and fro,
We pace, true lovers still !

Pale with life's snows of the north,
Scarred with fate's sad surprise,
Yet love in our hearts looks forth,
Looks out from spectacled eyes,

With the faith of the bygone years,
With the trust of the few to come,
Till the day of anguish and tears,
With one of us silent and dumb!

A WISH

IF Death would but forget him for some years,
And Heaven leave him health and a clear brain,
What might he not achieve? But now the fears
Of failing powers anticipate the ill,
As when of old the pestilential reign
Of Plague made cowards, and men failed for dread.

Leave him, O Death! some years wherein to weave
Entrancing truths from bee-touched thoughts to live
Far on, far off, beyond the centuries.
And when thou comest, let there be no strain
Upon the coil of life. Take thou thy sword,
And with divinest mercy cut the cord.

THE SECRET

AND yet, who knows what secret Nature keeps,
Keeps for the dead, what transmutation fine
Ourselves shall undergo, from what strange deeps
Shall break into a being all divine?

Where all the past, the happy past shall live,
Where knotted error shall be unravelled straight,
Where Love triumphant over Death shall give
The rose of life—the everlasting rose,
'Neath suns that know no setting, where great Fate
At last is fixed in joy, and none made desolate?
And who shall say this cannot be? *Who knows?*

A QUESTION

IF you were here,—and I were where you lie,
Would you, Beloved, give your little span
Of life remaining unto tear and sigh?
No—setting every tender memory
Within your breast, as faded roses kept
For giver's sake, of giver when bereft,
Still to the last the lamp of work you'd burn
For purpose high, nor any moment spurn.
So, as you would have done, I fain would do
In poorer fashion. Ah, how oft I try,
Try to fulfil your wishes, till at length
The scent of those dead roses steals my strength.

LOVE! AS I READ EACH WONDROUS WORD

LOVE! as I read each wondrous word,
That cleaves with light thought's misty
capes,

My heart leaps up, and all life's sands
Vibrate to some strange music heard,
And dreams long undefined take shapes.

So the dull grains of sand, that lie
Inert upon some metal plane,
Leap to the drawing of the bow,
Athwart its edge in music's flow,
And swift, as touched by unseen hand,
Obeying some divine command,
Take on fair forms of flower and star.

O Love! lost Love! thou art afar,
Yet still thy touch possesses me,

Fans the faint glowing fires aflame,
Stirs the dull units of my frame,
Transforms my thoughts to flower and star.

Full well I know, without the bow,
Without the touch of thy dear hand,
I had been—but the inert sand.

DIRGE

WEEP not for her departed
As gone for evermore,
Grieve not as broken-hearted,
That her pilgrimage is o'er.

Think when the fair day endeth,
And night, in saddening gloom,
Upon the earth descendeth,
And shrouds it like a tomb,

That the sun which lately shone
In beauty warm and bright,
Tho' set to us, is only gone
Another land to light.

Then do not vainly sorrow
For the lost, the loved, the best,
For she woke to a glorious morrow
When she laid her down to rest.

IN LIFE'S MORN

IN life's morn—the youth, joy bringing,
Lapped in love parental, pure,
From home scenes looks out secure,
Sees the flowers, hears birds singing.

Noon—in zenith of his powers,
With ambitions fierce possest,
With life's burdens sore opprest,
Hears no singing, sees no flowers.

Evening comes—again he walks
In the garden of the past,
Toil and fret are from him cast,
With sweet Nature's self he talks.

And he sees the flowers again,
And the birds' sweet song he hears,
As they were in early years,
Giving peace to heart and brain.

He in Nature's witching garden
Till the light is failing stays,
Noting all her pleasant ways,
For forgetting her asks pardon.
Then lays him down on earth's brown breast,
Shuts his eyes—and so to rest.

AIMLESS

AIMLESS to float upon the tide of life,
Aimless, and therefore hopeless—saddest fate
That man can ever know, with danger rife,
Black danger to the soul's eternal state.

Better to have creation's meanest thing
On which to lavish thought and energy,
Than bounding wishes in one daily ring,
Content oneself to eat, and sleep, and be.

And yet, when darkness, brooding o'er my soul,
Hides the fair mountain-tops where I would climb,
When from earth's valleys chilly mists uproll,
And my tried landmarks vanish in the rime,

Then I could almost wish myself a clod,
Who lives because he lives, some happy fool,
Like sheep who crops from day to day the sod,
Or lazy fly upon a stagnant pool,

So I might only be at rest, at rest!
Nor blind my eyes with looking at the light,
Nor, struggling for the highest and the best,
Fall from the summit of an Alpine height
To the deep chasm of a starless night!

A BUSH STORY

MOONBEAMS on the grassy height
Left their glittering silver trail,
And beneath with glory bright
Covered half the sleeping vale—
 'Twas a lovely sight to see,
 But alas! Ah me! ah me!

Home, the merry-making over,
Rode a troop all young and gay,
Two among them, maid and lover,
Sweet discoursing led the way—
 'Twas a pleasant sight to see,
 But alas! Ah me! ah me!

All forgetting in each other,
Soon they quit the moonlit track,
As the error they discover,
Hastily they turn them back,
 Riding, chiding merrily,
 But alas! Ah me! ah me!

Yawned a chasm deep and wide,
Into darkness, into space
Rode the lover and his bride—
On their souls may God have grace.
 That eve begun so merrily
 Should such wretched ending see!
 Alas! alas! Ah me! ah me!

A LITANY

FROM the restlessness, that fires
My quick brain with fierce desires
For the unattainable,
Save me!

From the sharp, the constant strife,
That the pulses of my life
Wage with the inevitable,
Save me!

From the wild, the vain regret
For the past, while still the Yet
Remains to work in,
Save me!

From the offering of the true,
Proved and tried, for phantoms new,
Cords of strength for gossamer,
Save me!

From knowledge that, unlinked to good,
Bears like yon tree ¹ but fruit of wood,
Now and for ever,
Save me!

¹ A bush tree in Australia that bears a pear of wood.

THE FIRE IS OUT!

THE fire is out! The cheery glow
That never played in vain,
The blazing flame, the sparkle bright,
No hand can light again.

Lonely the hearth, the ashes cold,
Cold and still and grey,
The dismal sight I cannot behold,
Carry the ashes away!

In darkness groping my hands I spread,
Filled with dread and doubt,
A chill creeps o'er me from the dead,
No light! no warmth! The fire is out!

IMAGINARY

FAREWELL!—ay, and may it fare thee well.
Though to thee I never can be more,
Still between us works a mystic spell
Till we meet on the Eternal Shore.

Peace attend thee, honour and high fame;
I shall watch thy doings from afar,
I shall glory when they laud thy name,
Thou, my morning and my evening star!

Be thy home as bright as thy dreamland,
Bid her love me, whom thou callest wife,
Tho' the goblet I may never hand:
Yea, I pray it, with my soul at strife.

And oh! do thou in thy happy hour,
When we meet as strangers, yet not so,
Help me with a word of truth and power
Onward where my duty bids me go.

Onward, upward, never turning back:
Dim grow the valleys to the mountaineer,
Clouds gather midway, melted is the track,
The mountain's steepest when the Heaven's most
near.

NOW AND THEN

1860

BIRDS are singing on bush and tree,
Singing a thousand loves and joys;
Once it was sweet music to me,
Now it seemeth only noise—

Ah! life's music fled with him!

Roses are blooming, once they were
Fairest of wonders that beauty weaves,
Now their perfume makes faint the air,
And to me they are just red leaves—

Ah! life's beauty faded with him!

Daylight dies, and the stars arise,
Not as of old with hope-giving light,
Then they looked loving like human eyes,
Now they are pitiless, cold, and bright—

Ah! the brightest star has set!

ALAS! WHAT TRICKS DOES MEMORY PLAY

'TIS years ago. I came one day
Unto your house without a sou,
And borrowed golden coin of you,
Which I, alas ! did not repay.
Alack! what tricks does memory play!

Once in a year, she flashed a ray
On the dark corners of my brain,
And then I to myself would say,
Good heavens! I will straight away
To pay my debt—I long full fain.
Alas! what tricks does memory play!

Her light put out, she laughed outright,
Drew fogs and darkness o'er the past,
Like some fen-haunting wicked sprite
That leads one from the beaten way;
I muse on this, and feel aghast.
Alas! what tricks does memory play!

Now nothing may I ever owe
Save only love to every friend,
If they will take such poor bestow:
And so this little coin I send
To pay my debt of years ago,
And henceforth ne'er have cause to say,
Alas! what tricks does memory play!

BIRDS OF THE AIR

ROUGH rise the waves to the wind's angry voice
Surging and springing,
Nor end nor beginning;
Soaring through mists the white seagulls rejoice.

So from the broad restless ocean of thought,
Soaring on pinions,
Through dreamland's dominions,
Rise feathered fancies, like sea-birds uncaught.

Sweeping through dreamland in freedom and purity
Birds of the air,
Now here and now there,
Catching through clouds some stray gleams of
futuraity.

Up in the blue from the cloud's fissured caves,
Glints of bright light
Gild the birds' flight,
Ere, seaward turning, they sink in the waves.

Ah! the winged thoughts soaring skyward from
home,

Ne'er shall we capture¹

In their first rapture,¹

Lost, undiscerned, as the birds 'mid the foam.

¹ These two lines closely resemble those of Browning's, but when I wrote those in 1855, I had never read a line of his.

BYGONES

WHEN we went bilberry-picking
On the hillside, you and I,
In the golden summer weather
'Mong the honey-scented heather
'Neath the blue, just cloud-flecked sky:
How we clamoured and made merry
When our fingers, purple stained,
Met above the dewy berry,
Fought for it, till none remained.
Was there ever such heart laughter?
In those happy summer days,
Our spirits loosed to madness
With wild unthinking gladness,
That can never come hereafter
In Life's wind-swept 'wildering ways.

Once again I climb the hilltop,
Sink my knees among the fern,
See the yellow-tinted wheat crop

In the golden sunset burn.
Other boys and girls are roaming
Through the bilberry bushes by,
Plucking berries with stained fingers,
Just as we did, you and I.
Comes their laughter from the distance
Wafted to me where I stand,
Thinking of a past existence
In my boyhood's fairy land.
Gently gliding comes the twilight,
Blinks a star from out the blue;
Oh, how bounded is my insight!
Here am I—but where are you?

THE WIND AT SEA

I WOKE in the night with the wailing
Of voices, now shrill and now deep;
I thought of the ships that were sailing,
Of mothers and wives that must weep.

I saw the mad ocean let fly
Its army of waters, and men
Dragged down in their terror to die,
Far, far away from our ken!

Thousands and thousands of cries
From ages ago I can hear
In the shrieks of the wind as it flies,
I shudder and tremble with fear.

Wild wind, that but late was consenting
With death in his dark jubilee,
Sad voiced, you are surely lamenting
The deeds you have done on the sea.

SPRING IN APRIL

SOFT airs of morn,
That waft sweet scents from wood and
hedgerow bowers,
Steeping my senses

In witching incense, born
Of this fair April who in mottled hours
Sunshine and rain dispenses,
And wakes to life and light the withered heaps by
winter shorn.

Gorse of bright gold,
With nutty fragrance strewing the cool air
From off the hill,
In spears of greenery stoled,
And primroses with steadfast eyes, and fair,
My heart's cup you do fill
With gladness, so unplucked you shall remain in
leafy fold.

The soaring lark
High up sends sprays of music on the breeze,
My soul uplifting,
Unto yon azure arc
Floating, upon a billowy cloud reclined,
Enraptured, drifting
In dreams divine where Time nor Death can set
their mark.

Oh, heavenly Spring !
Quicken my soul's desires that they may bloom
In loveliness,
And later harvest bring
Of fruits and pregnant seeds, in beauty's room, .
New lives to feed and bless,
That so I die not at my death, but live
In the glad hearts of those I made to sing.

MAY

LISTEN, a spirit is singing
Over the earth.

'Tis a new birth
Of beauty she carols; swift bringing
Verdure for field, blooms for the bower.
Life's great heart throbs with stronger beats,
Loveliness grows from hour to hour
And colours all the earth and sky;
Hope fills each breast, we know not why,
The joyousness of May entreats.

Clear sounds from tree to tree,
Cuckoo! cuckoo!
Into her shoe
The maiden peers to see
For thread of hair, black, brown, or gold.
Her anxious gaze is hope-posessed,
As tho' her fate she could unfold,
And by the rustic spell discover

If dark or fair shall be her lover.
Doubtful knowledge, mystic quest!

Orchards are white as snow,
For May has come:
You may hear the hum
Of the bee in the blossoms to and fro.
A wealth of flowers! the golden tress
Of laburnum hangs o'er the garden wall;
There sings the thrush with loving stress
From a bush of lilac, gay wall-flowers
Blazon the corners by leafy bowers.
Drink deep, that your soul may Life's May recall.

To doubting hearts, sweet May,
Sing " Joy is duty,
Garner beauty,
Store for the future, for delight,
And warmth against the chilly day
November's, with the lengthening night:
Joy's glories flaming to the end,
As Northern lights with darkness blend,
Stream through your hearts when old and grey,
And beautify them till the last pulse play."

A BURST OF SPRING

THE earth has laid her listening ear
Against the west wind's breast,
She hears his spirit's beating pulse,
And feels as one possessed.

She loosens quick her mantle brown,
And green are hill and coombe,
And where the west wind's wings have brushed
Sweet cowslips laugh to bloom.

And now comes dancing May, . . .
And all things laugh and play;
The dewy feet of brooks,
Stealing from mossy nooks,
Go patter, patter, down the runnels
Beneath the leafy tunnels,
Then twist in serpent dances
Beneath the sun's bright glances.

May! with what fresh delight
The woods await her;
She smiles, bare stems are dight,
Pray no sharp winds play traitor;
She waves the banners of the larch,
And spreads the chestnut fans,
That sheathed against the winds of March
In April burst their bands.

Awake, lean souls, who think
That happiness is sin,
Look thro' your closed eyes' chink,
And let the sunlight in!

To reach the blue of heaven
Sing, dance, like bird, or rill,
The clod within to leaven,
And so your end fulfil.

Gloom and doubt can souls destroy;
Nature with many voices
In all create rejoices,
And cries to human hearts, enjoy! enjoy!

THE FARMER'S LOT

ON the slopes each sun-browned field
Dowered with harvest face the morn,
Whistling the farmer counts the yield,
So many bushels of golden corn.

At evenfall, the beating rain
Drives down and soaks the golden grain,
Spreads the haulms o'er the sodden field.
Heavy enough is the farmer's heart
As he sees his golden hopes depart
In a cloud let loose from the sky.
No whistling now, but a sigh,
For him is the world awry.

BROWNING'S FUNERAL

December 31, 1889

THIS day within the Abbey, where of old
Our kings are sepulchred, a king of song,
Browning, among his peers is laid to rest,
Borne to the tomb by loving hearts, and stoled
In shining raiment that his genius wove.
No lingering sickness his, with swift surprise
Death flashed the Light Eternal in his eyes
And blinded Life. In this way he was blest.
Perhaps in some far star he now has met
His rose of love, his ne'er forgotten wife,
In life past death the passion of his life,
And they again as once in spirit blent
Look thro' the veil this day and hear the fret
Of many feet, the swelling music spent
On mourning listeners. With voices low,
Chanting her hymn, the boys sing as they go,
"He giveth his Beloved sleep." What tho'

The perishable forms these two once wore
In different lands lie sundered by the sea;
Their spirits smile at this our fond regret:
"What matters anything since we have met,"
They radiant sing. Together! oh, what more
Can love, long parted, from the Eternal crave?

And if there be no meeting past the grave,
If all is darkness, silence, yet 'tis rest.
Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep,
For God still giveth his beloved sleep,
And if an endless sleep he wills,—so best.

TENNYSON'S FUNERAL

October 12, 1892

BRING in our England's poet, Tennyson,
Song's silent master, to the Minster fold,
And lovingly with chant and tender benison,
Lay him with kindred dead in fame enrolled.

Death kissed him in the moonlight and he slept,
Oh, happy ending of a lovely life!
Hedged in by loving hands from cankering strife.
The music of the mind his fancies swept,

Melodious were his words and pure his lays,
Touching all hearts he sang in glorious song;
He lived beyond the Psalmist's length of days,
And died the while his mind was bright and strong

Yet still for us his spirit hovers round,
His pulses all divine stir ours below
With tremblings of the Eternal; fairy ground
He tilled for us where flowers for ever blow.

From storied window slants the golden light,
Sweet voices sing thy requiem song for thee,
"Crossing the bar." Perchance in that late night
The Pilot met thee by the unknown sea.

Oh, couldst thou tell us of the silent ways,
Return and tell us ! Lead us through the maze
Into the light of that most perfect day,
For which our hearts in anguish crave alway.

Ah, never!

The mirror gives no image though we gaze
For ever!

IN THE ABBEY

October 12, 1892

BRING in the silent master of song
To the Minster corner where poets rest,
Tenderly bear him, lay him along
With his kindred dead, the wisest, best.

Swelling and throbbing the deep notes roll
Over the tombs of our great, our kings,
Thrilling our hearts, like the sobs of a soul
That looks back to earth, while to Heaven it wings.

The feet of the mourners move slow with their
burden,

Singing his song blend sweet voices afar,
Perhaps the great singer has met, as his guerdon,
The Pilot he asked for in "Crossing the bar."

Lovely his life was, grand was his goal,
He blazoned the century's pages,
Death has his body, the living his soul,
That he poured out in song for the ages.

A REGRET

October 12, 1892

MY heart is full on this sad day,
My thoughts are with the widowed wife,
Who sees her comrade borne away,
Her other self, her dearer life.

For there far off he lies enshrined,
Within the grand old Minster hall,
Above him cold enduring stone,
She yields him to the nation's call.

I would have laid him where the grass
Grew green above, all starred with flowers,
Where morn and noon and evening pass
In changing moods, with changing hours.

Where birds in summer-time might light,
And pipe and sing, and scented sweet
Of thyme and gorse from upland height
Should lay its fragrance at his feet.

And thinking, that the time was brief
That kept her from that grassy bed,
Where she might calm her bitter grief,
By gain of nearness to the dead.

Oh, ye who love ! For this she lost
Grieve with her, thank her that she gave
Her dearest, counting not the cost,
For England to the Minster grave.

THE OLD HOME

I WENT to the house where we dwelt
For nearly two decades of years,
My soul was bowed down, and it knelt
In the rooms that were sacred to tears.

“ I sat in the seat of the scorners,”
Of all I had loved in my day,
Sweet memories peeped from the corners,
I kissed them and bore them away.

IN SWITZERLAND

ON the cold mountain-tops the cloudlets rest,
Break into snowflakes, that to ice is churned
Betwixt the grinding walls of rock incurred,
Swelling the mammoth glacier's white breast.
Forth steps the Spring, and west and south winds
blow,
Down glides the glacier, and the fissures grow
To deep crevasses, blue as gentian flowers,
Whilst as the sun leads on the golden hours,
At crazy depths below the waters rise,
Making their way through Hades' depths of gloom,
Till with a rush, from out their icy tomb,
They leap in gladness under sunny skies,
Dance down the vales, and win for all who toil
The wealth and increase of a fruitful soil.

THE GLACIER STREAM

THE glacier stream comes striding down,
With roar and spring from echoing steeps,
Straight from the heights of yon snow crown,
Where, 'twixt ridged walls of grey and brown,
A serpent glacier downward creeps.

Bound fast in cold lies yonder snow,
In deep ravines by rocky towers,
The sun's touch comes, and 'neath its glow,
With shock of life transmuted, flow
In rushing streams the crystal flowers.

O Love! thou art that frozen snow,
Thy spirit sleeps, nor seeks its goal,
Be mine the love to shed the glow,
To loose the stream of feeling's flow,
And wake to life and light thy soul.

THE GOLDEN-HEARTED ROSE

CLOSE at my open casement peep
A rose so pale and fair;
The sunset slants, and glows and steeps
Her through with golden air.

Enter, sweet rose, my dwelling,
Hallow it with thy breath,
Come, love is all-compelling,
Be mine through life till death.

I lean and kiss her, love possest,
My fingers round her close,
Here on my breast she finds her rest,
My golden-hearted rose.

JOYOUS LIVE

JOYOUS live, so not in vain,
Such is grateful duty,
Pluck the rose before the rain
Washes off its beauty.

Walk in sunshine while you can,
Sunny ways are safer ;
When the clouds gloom, be a man,
Light contentment's taper.

THE CHOICE

THERE is an immortality on earth,
The ever-fragrant blossom of good deeds ;
Some, dying, leave behind a field of weeds,
Some a rose-garden of perennial birth.
Oh, you who live! elect to plant the rose,
The rose immune of time, that shall outlive his
snows.

WEARY IS THE DAY

WEARY is the day with an eternal toil,
Weary are the life-springs as they slow un-
coil,

But or near or distant this the certain balm,
That the worn, the suffering souls of men should
calm:

Death, the gentle mother, shall visit the opprest,
And cradle all within her arms to everlasting rest.

THE COMMONPLACE

WHEN from past years dear ghosts arise,
And gaze at us with wistful eyes,
And beckon us with them to walk
Down well-known ways in heartfelt talk,
Then waking from that happiness
To find it is all nothingness,
When sorrow's floods rush 'neath our feet
And life gives nothing to entreat,—
Then comes to us the saving grace
And firm ground of the commonplace.

Oh, blest be human daily needs
That save us when the spirit bleeds,
When the soul's keep half overthrown
Makes reason totter on its throne;
That help the lone, of all bereft,
To walk straight 'twixt the right and left,
And by degrees take heart of grace;
Treading in bare but well-known meads,
The pathways of the commonplace.

NOW ON THE HILL-TOP

NOW on the hill-top high I tread,
Joy surging in my heart and brain,
Wild sweeping clouds above my head,
And pelted by the driving rain.

What care I for the rain and wind?
My bounding heart defies the weather,
For she has said, the fair, the kind,
"We two through sun and storm together."

A WAIL

DO you remember our walks
On the sands by the murmuring sea?
Hearts laid bare in our lovers' talks,
Faith undying you swore to me?

We meet again—I knowing how
(Still, wild heart, lest I utter a cry)
You broke your faith as you'd break a bough
From a tree that hindered you passing by.

Did circumstance stormily strand
Your truth, or did you make
Occasion to force fate's hand,
Nailing my soul to the stake?

Now you would woo me again,
Call the black interval madness,
I, spite of anguish of pain,
Must greet your returning with gladness!

How to excuse you ? This way,
Man must have (soul thrust apart)
Flesh and blood. Brutal, you say ?
True, but you first tore my heart.

Well, I have tasted the sorrow
Man sows and gives woman to reap;
Yet a rainbow shall span us to-morrow:
I love you—let bygones sleep.

WE BEAR EACH OTHER'S SINS

HE took the shirt, the hard hair shirt,
That next his heart he wore,
And bit by bit, and shred by shred,
The grisly garment tore.

Oh, trust divine, she did the same,
Now each the other knew,
"Henceforth there is but death alone
Can come betwixt us two.

"Now, walking in the light of truth,
For us new life begins,
For with Christ's love before our eyes
We bear each other's sins."

NOTE.—A scene in Hardy's novel, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, is of a confession between a man and a woman. The above poem is to show forth a different result.

“TOUT COMPRENDRE, C’EST
TOUT PARDONNER”

TO all the gossip that I hear
I'll give no faith, to what I see
But only half, for it is clear,
All that led up is dark to me.

Learn we the larger life to give,
To comprehend is to forgive.

Bethink you, ours but knowledge scant,
Of all the fettering, tightening chain
Of circumstance,—not virtuous rant,
But pity fall in gentle rain.

Learn we the larger life to live,
To comprehend is to forgive.

But truth is truth—one pure white light !
Ah! split the beam, how many hues,

In rainbows dipped, burst on the sight,
Yet into one white beam they fuse.

Learn we the larger life to live,
To comprehend is to forgive.

One truth is made of many; so
Did we the wondrous prism hold
Omniscience, thoughts divine would flow,
And love our fellow-men enfold.

Learn we this larger life to live,
To comprehend is to forgive.

ECSTASY

FAR up on grassy heights I walk,
In air divine of phantasy,
And to my other self I talk
Of all that is—or is to be.
The gates of Heaven are ajar,
I hear sweet voices from afar,
Beyond earth's bounds from moon and star
And distant suns. O ecstasy!
An inner sense is borne in me
Of sight and sound; from crystal sea
Of purest thought flash lights divine;
Soul! seize the moment, make it thine.

A SAINT'S SOLILOQUY

'TIS hard indeed to walk on heavenly heights
Of godlike calm, to drink in the pure air
Of sweet serenity, and not to feel
The battling clash of passion in our hearts,
Rousing our wrath against our fellow-men
For all their deeds of selfish treachery.
Yet would I be even as th' Eternal God,
Unmoved to anger by their faults and sins,
Letting these be their only punishment;
Filled with divinest pity, that should see
The streak of gold within the stony heart,
Discerning as with an omniscient eye
The chain of fate that circumstance had forged,
And the weak will that could not break the chain.
So would I then, filled with the breath divine,
Walk 'mong my fellows, hourly scattering
The golden gifts of an untiring love.

AN AGNOSTIC HYMN

O H! not the unreasoning God for me,
Foreseeing, knowing all
That in the wondrous world he made
His creatures should befall.

Created them with keen desire,
Then called fulfilment sin,
And drove them forth with flaming fire,
Their toil-earned bread to win.

And then repenting of his deed,
A man God did create,
Who by his death upon the cross
That sin should expiate.

The God whom man eats in the bread,
Whose blood he drinks in wine,
Such pagan faith be far from me—
I own a more divine.

I see in every tree that grows,
In seed that all contains,
In every wind, and cloud that flows
In fertilising rains,

In every stone whose atoms whirl,
Yet seems so coldly still,
Or in the wood with living sap,
Thy unresistless will.

In sands that at a vibrant sound
Of music straightway leap,
And range themselves in beauteous forms
From out the inert heap.

In far off stars, in blazing suns
That never, never rest,
What tho' I cannot understand,
My God is manifest.

No knowledge mine that when I die
I e'er shall live again,
I am thy creature, and content
With what thou dost ordain.

To thee I bow, I lift my soul,
I, thy all-teeming clod,
Seen Spirit—yet invisible—
The Great, the Unknown God!

THE FERRYMAN'S TOLL

CLOSE to the bank, by the dark river
Floats a black boat. Mute on his oars
Rests the worn ferryman;
Haggard his face, his thin limbs shiver.
"Ho, there! ferryman!" haileth a wanderer,
"Ferryman, hither!—What is your name?"
"Aye," said the ferryman, "ready, aye ready;
Wilt cross the dark river and win to yon shore?
But he who goes thither returns nevermore.
Names have I many, Disease, Want, Sorrow,
I take to the land of no man's to-morrow,
To the King whose touch freezes, passionless old,
Whose existence began when the earth was unrolled:
Will you face him?" The wanderer paused, as a
dream

His life passed before him: in youth he had set
Success above all things, pushing aside
All hindrances to it, father and mother,
Supports that had served him; even his wife,

She who once loved him, she too had died
Of his torturing will, daily grind of long years;
His children, ah! them too he'd driven away.
Fame, riches he'd won, but had lost life's best joy,
Love at his hearth, friends for his age.

Home! hollow echo! "Yes, I will cross,
Cross the dark river.

Ferry me over." "Aye, but your toll!
Know you not, wanderer,

Every one crossing must hand me his soul?"
Then did the wanderer about himself vainly
Search for the jewel.

"Back till you find it," the ferryman cried.
Silent the boat passed, leaving the man
Mute overwhelmed in the land of the living
With a new knowledge.

And therefore, some day he will find his lost soul,
And with it bright shining go down to the ferry
And cross the dark river.

BRECHIN CASTLE

DARK pines upon my right are seen,
This wood the sunset hems,
Yet spears of light dart in between
And strike the red-brown stems.

There line on line, straight, stately, strong,
Upgrowing to the light,
They stand like some great warrior throng
That fights for home and right.

A ship's tall mast some pine may be,
Bearing the billowing sail,
And through its sound integrity
That ship shall ride the gale.

Now past the wood, I swift attain
An open grassy height,
Where haycocks dot a wide-spread plain,
Beneath the westering light.

So musing, back with footsteps slow,
The happy home I gain,
Whose Chief repose can hardly know,
So constant is the strain

To do for every tenant hand
The best with all his might,
And in the councils of the land
To strive for truth and right.

His wife, most beautiful and tall,
Bright glowing as a rose,
Full looks of admiration fall
Upon her as she goes.

And lovely children round them stood,
It was joy's full spring-tide:
Life promised all things great and good,
That should for years abide.

A little time—o'er heaven's blue
Dark clouds spread chill and vast,
And, in the prime of life, those two
Swift into darkness passed!

Their children live, they never know
The treasures they have lost:
Nature! thou slayest with a blow,
But dost not count the cost.

GUINEVERE

I HAD read of Guinevere,
How her heart was fit to break,
And I needs must pity her
And brave Lancelot of the Lake.

Why did Arthur let him go?
What mad folly filled his breast,
On another to bestow
The dear honour of love's quest?

For when Lancelot rode to bring
Her sweet self, by Arthur sent,
Straight she, deeming 'twas the king,
Loved her dream's embodiment.

Had there been in Arthur's moulding
More of man and less of saint,
Virtue none the less upholding,
But a little more acquaint

With the way to win the treasure—
Love—no earthly power can sever,
And when loosed, to keep the measure
Of love's music beating ever;

Then her fancy for the knight
As a star had paled away,
Fading with the things of night
In the glorious sun of day.

But he, erring in the dream
Of a virtue kept apart
From that ever-running stream,
That must fertilise the heart,

Lived as saint and fought as knight,
Wandering by mount and mere,
Battling ever for the right,
Yet neglecting Guinevere;

So that she to Lancelot turned,
Ever by her side was he,
Heart with heart in love-beat burned,
Came remorse and misery.

Ah, forgive them! love is need.
Arthur, righteous, cold, severe,
Thus repelled her—so I plead
For Lancelot and for Guinevere.

BESIDE THE WATERFALL

EVENING

'TWAS but last night, and yet it seems
A year ago since we two walked
Within the wood, and of sweet dreams
And all the life before us talked:
I drank the scented pine-trees' breath,
Joy in my heart, on flowers I trod,
And all the time the shadow Death
Beside us stalked unseen. My God!
The vision haunts me, and through all
I hear the rushing Waterfall.

We stopped and kissed, scarce lips could part
I turned, and he went on his way;
Once I looked back with beating heart,
Glad that I had not said him "Nay."
Sudden there leapt from out the wood
Another form. High words and strife
Arose, my other suitor stood
Above my love; I saw the knife

Gleam in the light and strike him prone.
I could not speak, my soul made moan
In gasps, and through it all
I heard the rushing Waterfall.

Oh, great and bitter punishment
For spreading nets of coquetry!
Oh, happy life for ever spent!
Oh, my dead love! Through me, through me!
I ran to help, I cried for aid,
They came and bore my love away;
I dared not know the worst, nor stay,
But fled into a silent glade
And tried, but all in vain, to pray.
Nearing I heard swift footsteps race,
The slayer and I were face to face.
"O treacherous heart, my love to kill,
When did we work you any ill?"
Thus spoke I trembling, and through all
I heard the rushing Waterfall.

"Last nightfall when within the wood,
Dumb, fixed and overwhelmed I stood,
And listened to you plighting troth,

My blood boiled up, I swore an oath
The door of death should open wide
Ere ever you should be his bride."

The stars came out, the night-wind moaned,
Dead leaves dropped down no longer owned
By living boughs, a bird's low call—
I noted each, yet heeded not,
The whilst he spoke; and through it all
I heard the rushing Waterfall.

" You netted me with silken smiles,
Took me for partner at the games,
I cannot count the thousand wiles
By which you set my heart in flames."
" I only wished to please—ah me! "—
" Now God forgive such piety,
That crowns us all with misery."
Parting the boughs he turned and fled,
They lightly swinging bent to place,
The tireless stars shone overhead,
No more for me a day of grace.
A mad thought came, to end it all
Within the rushing Waterfall.

But something stayed me. It might be
Some rustling of an angel's wing
That stirred the airs of hope for me,
And made once more my life's bell ring
True notes and clear; and so I bent
My slow steps home, with sorrowing heart
To suffer all my punishment,
To bear my fellows' gibes and scorns,
Never in all my life to part
With my self-woven crown of thorns.
Oh, night of grief!—yet through it all
I heard the rushing Waterfall.

MORNING

He lives! and all is well, he lives!
How sweet it is when God forgives.
Fled are the shadows of the night,
Like fields of corn in summer winds
My full heart dances with delight.
And oh! there's laughter in the brawl
And rushing of the Waterfall.

THE WITCH MAIDENS OF FILEY BRIG

[Suggested in August, 1835, by the sight of the tall dancing waves
advancing and receding to and from Filey Brig, Filey.]

HELEN CARDROSS is the plighted bride
Of Harold the Norseman. "Now, dear heart,
Wish me God-speed, for my ship doth ride
At the harbour bar and I must depart,
For the white witches dance upon Filey Brig."
She plucked him a rose and an evergreen sprig,
"Wear this and my love in thy breast."

Spoke he, "Heart's love, nothing can stay
Love like ours, sure as the tides;
In life or death I am thine for aye,
Life may perish, but love abides.
Life is the rose, love the evergreen sprig,
Kiss me and part, for on Filey Brig
The witch maidens leap to the crest."

Oh, the long time unending and drear,
Starv'd with hope's pitiful dole,
Her mind was possessed of a nameless fear,
She prayed for him body and soul:
" Mary in Heaven, keep my heart's choice
From the white witches dancing on Filey Brig,
And I'll hang at thy altar a silver sprig."

A tempest in autumn, the storm-fiends yell
In the wind-swept vaults of heaven,
The sea is lashed to a boiling hell
Surrounding the witches seven,
And gruesome wreckers make devils rejoice,
As they light false fires with splinter and sprig,
To lure the ships on to Filey Brig.

" Father, I see a ship in the gloom,
It nears the breakers, 'tis his maybe.
Now curst be you all if you bring to doom
The ship in her peril from land and sea;
Scatter the burning splinter and sprig
That are luring the vessel on Filey Brig,
To the clutch of the witches leaping."

Said he, " It must founder, if wrecked on shore
Better for us, for them no worse;
The kists are empty of stuffs and store,
And never a coin is left in the purse.
Help, comrades, the fire with splinter and sprig,
That shall bring the ship round by Filey Brig,
Where the maidens are coiling and creeping."

Helen stood out on the headland height,
In the blinding storm by the raving sea,
She wrung her hands and prayed for the light
In her helplessness and her misery.

" Life is the rose, love the evergreen sprig,
And both are for him. Now to Filey Brig,
Where the witch maidens gleam in the gloom."

Down the path of the cliff she ran,
Touched the beach with her fear-winged feet,
Reached the rocks at the narrowest span,
North and south where the waters meet.

" Angels give power to the evergreen sprig,
To daunt the white witches of Filey Brig,
Whose clutch of the living is doom."

Up to the heavens, and down to the deep,
Ever and ever the ship is tost,
The billows unite, and in one fell sweep
It is lifted and riven, and all is lost!
No! no! by the might of the evergreen sprig
It is swirled past the witches of Filey Brig
And carried high up on the shore.

She gains the wreck through the lashing seas,
One thought in her mind as she makes her way,
Though many are struggling but one she sees,
Harold her love as he senseless lay.

"Oh, woe to the rose and the evergreen sprig,
Have they won, the witch maidens of Filey Brig?
Shall I hear his dear voice nevermore?"

Desperate she clutches his ice-cold form,
With fiery impulse, God-given strength,
Drags him away through the deafening storm,
And lays him down on the cliff-side length:
"Are they dying, the rose and the evergreen sprig,
By the spells of the witches of Filey Brig?
Then God take me too from the strife."

He breathes, he sighs, and his lids unclose,
He smiles on Helen with dim delight,
The smile and the sigh are more precious than gold,
Heaven opens, she thinks, on her longing sight.
Bereft are the witches of Filey Brig,
There waves in her heart the fair evergreen sprig,
As trembles the rose of her life.

He wakes, he rises; the death-dream is past—
"Saved, Harold, saved." "Ay, love, and by thee;
The tempest is dying, 'tis daybreak at last,
And blue breaks the heaven above you and me,
In the deeps sleep the witches of Filey Brig;
Through thee has prevailed the blest evergreen sprig,
And blossoms the rose of my life."

THE STORY OF NICOLO TOLDA

NICOLO TOLDA, furious, amazed,
Stood in the prison room,
Whilst Siena's Riformatori
Read to the youth his doom.

"Inasmuch as you, Nicolo Tolda,
Strove, and have spoken ill
Of the noble Marchese del Monto,
Have incited the people to kill

"And rebel 'gainst the loyal Reformers
Of the country's laws, your head
For the good and peace of the city
We declare to be forfeited."

Spoke raging Nicolo Tolda,
"What, kill me in flower of my youth?
I, strong in the strength of my manhood,
To be slain for your devilish ruth!

" Fiends, are ye cowards as well ?
Have you none of you sons of your own ?
If one stood condemned as I do,
Would your hearts be as hard as stone ? "

" Did we spare you, Nicolo Tolda,
Your plotting would never cease,
Dissensions and tumult and battle
In the city—nevermore peace.

" Confess you your sins and be shriven,
Five days to prepare are decreed ;
'Tis more righteous that one should suffer
Than scores of your fellow-men bleed."

Nicolo, foaming with fury,
Laughed every priest to scorn,
He cursed the Lord God Almighty,
Cursed the black day he was born ;

Till one spoke of the holy Cath'rine,
His face lit up as he heard,
His eyes for her seemed to be asking ;
That evening they brought her word.

Entered the famed Bennicasa:

“ The peace of the saints, sweet son,
Wrap your fainting soul as a heavenly shroud,
Till your sands of life be run.”

He turned at the sound of her voice,
As with outstretched arms she stept,
Her face illumed by a love divine;
He fell on her neck and wept.

“ Oh, sainted, beloved Bennicasa!
'Tis you have the power to bless,
You so tender and loving
Will feel for my sore distress.

“ Oh, Cath'rine, how shall I bear my fate,
'Fore my time to lie under the sod ?
Where is the peace that you speak of ?
Where is the mercy of God ? ”

“ Before your time as you judge it,
But not God's time, sweet son,
You may leave the delights of this world,
But the joys of heaven are won.

" Think of the death of the Saviour;
Your life will be gone at a breath,
But Christ three hours was enduring
The pains of a lingering death."

She swayed his soul as compelling winds
Bend the stiff tree to their will,
Oh, the magic power of mind on mind
To lift unto life or to kill!

So Tolda confessed, found peace, but cried,
" By the love of God come that day,
Lest my courage fail and my heart grow faint,
Be with me, my heart's sole stay."

Before the bells of the city rang
She was with him, and at her sign
He knelt at the Mass, and, wondrous thing,
He drank of the living wine.

His will was subdued to the Lord's, remained
But fear he might fail and fall,
But God creating desire of God
Supreme, he longed for the call.

“ Be near and do not forsake me, sweet maid,
Till my body and soul are rent,”
He laid his head on her heart and said,
“ And then I shall die content.”

So in strong communion, divining
And feeling his fears, she said,
“ Sweet brother, we two shall surely stand
At the marriage feast comforted.

“ Thou bathed in the blood of the Son of God,
In the name of Jesus wilt fare
To the place of death to yield thy breath,
And I will await thee there.”

And after that, think of it, brothers!
His face was transfigured, fear fled;
He knew not how to exist till the day,
God's glory played round his head!

“ Whence comes this great grace, Bennicasa,
That thou shouldst give ear to my cry?
That thou, sweetness and joy of my soul,
Shouldst await me when I am to die?

“ And a thousand years it will seem,
Thinking thou’rt waiting for me,
Till I lay down my head on the block—
Dear Christ, Thou wert nailed to the tree! ”

Alone she awaited him; kneeling
She prayed for her brother attaint,
In the presence of Mary invisible,
And of Catherine, martyr and saint.

She laid down her head on the block
In the stillness of morn’s first light,
But feebly she felt his suffering,
Tho’ she wrestled in prayer that she might;

And sought of Mary this grace,
That when Tolda to this point came
She would fill his heart with peace and light,
And his end be in Jesus’ name.

And later, so full of this promise
Was her soul, and so drawn to the Three,
That of all the vast concourse of people
Around her, not one did she see.

Then Nicolo came like a lamb,
And smiling besought on his head
She should sign him with sign of the cross;
She made it, and tenderly said,

"Down to the marriage, sweet brother,
Thou whom the Lord commands
To Life Everlasting." So gently
He knelt down,—and with her own hands

She placed his head under the knife:
"The blood of the Lamb be thy stay."
He uttered but—"Jesus! Catherine!"
And as his soul passed away

She received his dear head in her hands,
Sobbing, "God's will is my law,"
And gazing in ecstasy upward
This is the vision she saw :

The heavens were parted, and glory
Flooded the courts within,
Where God and the Spirit and Jesus
Awaited the cleansed from sin.

As the spirit form upward floated,
Him welcomed the Holy Three,
And joy, as it were of a thousand hearts,
O'erwhelmed him with ecstasy.

But as bride at the door of the bridegroom
Turns with a last farewell,
So he, smiling, turned at the gates of heaven,
To her who had saved him from hell.

Vanished the vision, but peace,
Deep peace, o'er her heart-throbs stole;
And his blood streaming over her garments
Was as perfume distilled from his soul.

Oh, deathless love of the creature!
Oh, charity covering all sin!
What can they not compass when soul with soul
Are in touch? What heaven not win?

So died Nicolo Tolda,
In his life's young flowering spring.
May we all have a saintly soul to help,
When Death brings the frozen ring.

AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF PHILIPPE AUGUSTE

IN the grand old Abbey the Abbot lay dead,
With lighted candles at foot and at head.

Rich his vestments but poor his state,
For he hath entered the iron gate.

His pomp of office, he hardly cold,
Fills others with longing to have and to hold.

Finished his life, his works, his prayers,
Peace for him—for the living snares.

Like stone-wrought trees on either hand
The beautiful leaf-crowned pillars stand.

A poet's dream is the foliage fair,
But what peeps forth as from wild beasts' lair?

Hideous faces like devils accurst,
Anger and murder, envy and lust.

Voices are chanting in sounds divine
Words that all hearts should to God incline;

But worldly thoughts even monks will fill
As long as hearts beat for good or ill.

They stir up the passions in stone portrayed.—
Three monks by ambition and avarice swayed,

Each with intention resolved to be
Abbot of all that company.

Philippe Auguste in his palace alone
Mused by the fire, his courtiers gone,

On whom to bestow the Abbacy
Of St. Denis. A voice, "Sire, a monk to see

"You has come, and he craves this grace,
He may speak to your Majesty face to face."

"Let him approach." 'Twas the provost stood,
Gold bag in hand. He raised his hood,

And kneeling down, of the king's mercy
Asked of St. Denis the abbot to be.

“Go,” said the king, “we will think it o’er.”
The five hundred livres were left on the floor.

It must be a rich post, the king said to himself,
Since the provost would bribe me with so much pelf.

Again the door opened. “Once more your grace
Is craved by a monk to speak face to face.”

Ay, let him enter, thought Philippe Auguste,
An abbot expectant, I swear by St. Juste.

’Twas the treasurer: “Sire, behold in me,
One who of St. Denis the abbot would be.

“Holy my life, of the revenues
A goodly part shall be kingly dues.”

“Ah,” said the king, with a mocking smile,
“It is hard to decide: I must think awhile.

Retire.” He did, but of body and soul
Five hundred livres he had left as toll.

And the king sat smiling. Again the page
Entered, behind him a monk. In rage

Up rose the king. "What want you with me?"

"May I pray you listen, your Majesty?"

"Beseech you, my lord, grant my desire,
I, cellarman of the Abbey, aspire

"To the Abbacy; an you grant my wish,
Good wine my tribute, and golden fish;

"Five hundred livres in this bag I bring,
No man more religious than I, O King!"

Now hardly the king could his countenance keep,
He longed to laugh, and he longed to weep,

But said, "Away, now, whom God shall call,
Him as your Abbot I will install."

On the morrow the king to the Abbey went,
Pages behind him with gold bags bent.

A young monk stood in study apart,
In whose face might be read he'd a guileless heart.

To him strode the monarch, his shoulder touched;
The youth turned round and his pale face flushed.

Said Philippe, " Poor is this monk enow,
With livres fifteen hundred I him endow,

" That three generous men of this company
Have bestowed as a gift for the Abbacy.

" I choose this shepherd this flock to fold:
Monks of St. Denis, your Abbot behold! "

A TALE OF THE SEA

'TWAS the time of Assize in the town again,
The judges in robes arrayed
In scarlet and ermine, with javelin men,
Rode in a grand parade.

The town was full, for word had gone forth
That an eerie tale of the seas
Would be heard in court: from South to North
Flocked people of all degrees.

And this was the case. In a tropic sea,
A man of the *Halcyon* said
He had sighted a boat, with sailors three,
Two living, and one of them dead.

Then one of the living was bid to tell
How the dead man came by his fate,
Said he, "I'll speak truth, tho' I'm fair in Hell
With the deed of myself and mate.

" 'Twas the seventh time that I went afloat,
When our ship from Cardiff sailed
For Singapore—and as tight a boat
As ever a shipwright nailed.

" Didn't she fly like a roaring flame,
With the spanking breezes aft,
Like a wild thing that one could hardly tame:
I was proud of the lively craft.

" We had reached the Indian Ocean,
In latitude fifteen south,
When a hurricane came; I'd a notion
We were caught in the devil's mouth.

" We tried but couldn't take in a sail,
I tumbled into a boat
With five other men; in the thundering gale
We could hardly keep her afloat.

" The ship went down in the mad cyclone,
With all the rest of the crew;
She made a hole like a giant stone,
We were nearly sucked in too.

“ The wind it lessened—and there we were,
With never a drink nor crust;
The sun looked down with a red-hot stare,
I wished I was ashes and dust.

“ One of the saved was my sister’s son,
Sixteen years old was he,
Good as gold and full of fun,
He was set upon coming to sea.

“ First two men died and the second mate;
Poor wretch, he went raving mad,
He jumped overboard one evening late,
We were too sick at heart to be sad.

“ Our tongues were stiff, our lips were black,
Our heads seemed all alight;
Each took his shirt from off his back
To catch the dews at night.

“ When the sixth day came Hicks whispered me,
‘ One of us will have to go.
I’ve got a wife and children three,
And you have the same, I know.

“ ‘ Now what is the youngster’s life to ours ?
He hasn’t got wife nor child ;
Besides, he cannot live many hours.’
‘ No! No! ’ I cried, half wild.

“ But he neared to Bill, who faintly said,
‘ Don’t kill me, Hicks—Oh, Jim! ’
Hicks out with his knife and the lad was dead,
He never moved even a limb.

“ And Hicks sucked long lest the blood should cool,
I turned so as not to see,
Dead sick, when he called out, ‘ You roaring fool,
You will have to do like me.

“ ‘ The lad is gone, there’s no more to be said,
His blood will save your life;
If you do not drink, you too will be dead,
And you’ll never set eyes on your wife! ’

“ And the craving to drink was a crazing pain,
I turned and sucked of the blood,
And I felt there was stuff in my veins again,
And life came back on the flood.

" We left the corpse of the lad alone,
In case a ship came our way,
We wanted the wretched truth to be known
That 'twas not altogether foul play.

" A day went by, and we sighted a ship;
We tied a shirt to an oar,
And hoisted it up with a feeble grip,
She saw us—I knew no more

" Till I found myself in a cot a-swing,
With the doctor looking at me,
And I told him the whole of the horrid thing,
Of the deed that had to be.

" They brought us home, and here we stand
In the dock, for the murder of Bill,
Strict speaking, Hicks should have held his hand,
But there's much to be said for us still.

" Gentlemen all, and your Honour likewise,
Will you fancy yourselves in the boat,
On the glaring sea, under brassy skies,
With black lips and burning throat;

“ With the maddening craving of thirst that grew,
With the thought of child and wife,
With the lad to die in an hour or two,
That drove Hicks to shorten his life ?

“ Fellow-men all, will you give a God’s-look
Deep into your hearts, all thrird
Criss-cross-like with feelings, and kissing the Book
Say—We’d never have done as you did ? ”

Then the judge summed up with a merciful word,
And the jury went out to confer,
The sobs of the prisoners’ wives were heard
As the jury came back with a stir.

“ We find,” said the foreman, “ we’re all agreed—
And we’ve taken thought to decide—
That the poor lad’s death was a thing of need,
Justifiable homicide.”

Then the people cheered right lustily,
No one deemed the verdict odd,
For every man felt it might have been he,
Except by the grace of God !

THE MUGGEROO

AS I was walking down Pall Mall
I met the Muggeroo,
"And what's the time of day?" I said.
"Now what is that to you?
'Tis just what comes into your head."—
"Oh, my! that can't be true!"

"There's nothing isn't true," said he,
"If just you think it is,
And you may argue all day long,
And but arrive at this."—

"Well, that is strange but pleasant too,
For each is always right,
And I can say it is broad day,
Whilst you maintain 'tis night.

"Somehow it seems not quite the thing,
But we will work it out,
Suppose you come and lunch with me
On steak and bottled stout?"

He came, that wise philosopher.
I gave without remorse
Some bitters mixed with liquorice,
For steak a cut of horse.

Quoth he, " There is some great mistake,
Or I'm not Muggeroo,
The stout is physic horrible,
The steak is kangaroo! "

I said, " What matter if it is,
You've only got to think
The chunk of horse is good rumpsteak,
The physic stout you drink."

I quoted him, " There's naught untrue
If true you think it is,
And two may argue all day long,
And but arrive at this."

He glared at me, and left the room,
I did that man convince,
The great wise man who studied Kant—
I've never seen him since!

TO R. B.

A PERSISTENT INQUIRER AFTER THE VEGETABLES
AT HODESLEA

THE early peas are coming up in green and even
rows,

At least all those which have escaped the beaks of
daws and crows.

And cabbages in vulgar form, and yet so full of
heart,

And rhubarb forced in dark brown pots to make a
lovely tart.

Each juicy lettuce stands alone and looks down on
the cress,

And when I eat them with cold lamb their juicy
coolth I'll bless.

The cherry-tree against the wall is white as surf of
sea,

And blushing at her beauty stands the flowering
apple-tree.

I send this information so engrossing for R. B.
And with it, thanks most hearty for his postal card
to me.

He is so fond of Nature that I should not think it
strange

If he should transmigrate into a flower for a change;
And just for this occasion on this Adriatic ploy,
I know the flower he'd choose to be—it is the
“ Traveller's Joy.”

REFLECTIONS

HONOURS? They cannot ennoble
That which already is noble;
Gold that is pure is no purer
Because it is stamped with the hall-mark.

Fawning, the critics like dogs lick your hands
Or furiously rage—but stand steadfast,
In each case unmoved: thus unnoticed,
They slink back to silence.

A great tragedy is a picture of our soul's possibilities.

Life becomes harder as we grow older because we
are using up hope.

"WITH TENDEREST LOVE"

WITH tenderest love—O as of yore,
Be still with me: our spirits blent
In love's communion: more and more
For us remains this sacrament.

Death does not part. In spirit sense
It draws us nearer, soul to soul,
It lifts us to the Great Immense,
Where suns for ever shine and roll.

And whilst red life this body fills,
The ways I tread shall catch the glow,
Of those great suns, from off the hills
We climbed together, long ago.

OH! COULD I TELL

O H! could I tell the rushing thoughts, the
longing,
When founts of feeling stir the teeming brain,
(Must the heart suffer that the spirit gain ?)
The thoughts that like migrating birds come
thronging,
Winging their way to the bright summer-land,
Where erst with my Belovèd hand in hand,
We joyous walked amid a land of flowers
In happy wonder at the golden hours.
Sometimes woe met us: but we wept *together*
And hand clasped hand the closer, till, ah me!
The night fell by a vast and circling shore,
Where loud we heard tumultuous breakers roar;
The sun sank red behind an angry sea,
And his hand slipped from mine—And suddenly
I found myself alone! O Sea! dread Sea!

GONE ARE THE SNOWS

GONE are the snows of yesterday,
Rains fell from heaven and swept away
The winter fleece. Thank God alway,
Cold, cold, the freezing winter fleece;
Had it endured, gone was my peace;
The rains of sorrow brought release.

Then airs of spring began to blow
From off the heights of long ago,
And roots long planted fained to grow,
And put forth flowers, like those we two
Culled in green lanes no others knew.
Oh! days that thrill me through and through!
Eyes smile to eyes. You voice command,
"Gather the flowers,"—I pluck, I stand
Entranced with you in spirit-land.

ROSES

MY roses in rose-beds growing
All in the sunshine glow,
Daily I tend, I water them,
About their roots I hoe.

My heart's roses have perished,
But their memories still are aglow,
With my soul's tears I water them,
Around their roots I hoe.

My desolate life they brighten,
Tho' I water them with my tears;
When I die—they will still be blooming,
Tho' I live for a hundred years.

Tho' I live for a hundred years,
My heart will beat to love's passion,
Life is love: Love is life, my dears.
Dear God! Thou hast had compassion.

AFTERWARDS

CHILDREN dear! Let there be
No long bewailings
When I am dead:
Give just a tear,
Love for my love of you,
Smiles for my failings.

Dears! I have loved you well,
Do not forget,
Against my shortcomings
Let this be set.

No custom payment
Of funeral raiment,
Let anyone wear:
Just your hearts' mourning
For a while spare,
Then let my memory
Brighten your lives,

Dear ones! And linked to yours,
Husbands' and wives'.

Lay me beside the one
Love of my life,
As I, his one love was,
I, happy wife.

To the Great Silence,
To the Great Rest,
Drop me in quietly,
Passed from life's quest
To the eternities—
God holds the rest.

TRANSFORMATION

THE white bird of winter
Is plucking his breast
Of its soft downy cover,
And wraps up the earth
For a season of rest,
Like some pitiful lover.

But spring, winter over,
Wild music will blow,
And smiling uncover
The living below.

TO MRS. WILFRID WARD

April 1, 1899

WHEN first the raging fiery sun of grief
Sucked up my life, and left my parched-up
soul
Longing for bowers for ever, ever lost;
I unawares stept on a kindly land
Of leafy trees, with cool inviting shade,
Whereon one came to meet me, unafraid
In that I ever one sad bell would toll.
And she from that sad note would me beguile,
And win from me the too infrequent smile.
Now in sweet friendship heartdrawn we would walk,
Of feathered fancies, rainbow tipped, would talk,
Or of soul-lifting thoughts to heights sublime.
Thus did you smooth the grooving ways of Time.
So for your strengthening help, dear friend and true,
I send this booklet of my thoughts to you.

•

THE QUEST

TELL me, O passer by!
Do the Great ones die?
What tho' our hearts are sore,
That the forms they wore,
When on earth they trod,
Now beneath the sod,
Must ebb and ebb away,
By the supreme decay
Of Nature: yet O! must
Minds return to dust?
Reason, love, and mirth,
All that made this earth
Joyful, made by man:
Minds with flash divine
Whose sun fiery shine
On black depths could play,
Turning dark to day;
Were they part of death?
Or could living breath,

Life's electric streams,
All science knows or dreams,
Go forth to meet in space,
And in some whirling race,
Reconstitute the mind,
And form which it enshrined ?
Must we for ever sail
Thro' thought's unbounded space,
Nor e'er the secret trace,
O God behind the veil !
Dreamer of dreams afar !
Accept things as they are :
Our tenure here is sure,
To work, to love, to grieve ;
Reverently to endure.
So helping all we can
Our suffering fellow-man,
For all our happiness,
Let us the givers bless ;
And in the soul's distress,
Bow to the inevitable.
This, this is to be stable,
This, this is righteousness.

THE SONG OF THE LARK

HERE as I lie on the down,
(With the sea and sky as an arc
Meeting; yet never uniting),
I hear the sweet singer, the lark.

Garlands of blossoming song
He scatters upon the still air;
These are the hours to prolong,
These that make living so fair.

Could I but sing as you sing,
Bird with the passion possest!
How I would make the world ring,
Waken the bosoms at rest.

Could I but ring as you sing,
I would not wish to be sage,
For, little bird, I would bring
Joy to spent souls in life's cage.

(The lark sings: the listener interprets.)

" Turn out tired heart to the sun,
Fling out your rubbish and dust,
Pure let the wine of life run,
Cleared from the lees of the must."

" Soar you to heaven, altho'
On the brown earth is your nest,
Rejoicing and working, for so
Only shall mortals be blest."

Bird, you have unlocked my prison,
Where my poor heart lay in sadness:
'Tis my Easter! And I am arisen
To Life!—*In its work lies its gladness.*

Happy I rose from the down,
(Life and death seemed now forming the arc,
Meeting some day to unite):
I had found out the song of the lark.

THE WIND'S VOICES

EARTH'S quickened breathings,
Winds of the spring !
To the brown face of hers
Colour you bring.

And hope to each soul
Of a gladness to be,
Of the future unfolding
Love, fame, liberty.

Breeze of the summer,
What do you bring?
Snatches of tenderest
Thoughts on the wing.

Waking the hearts
Of the youth and the maiden,
Flourishing with-woolfs,
I see love to be

Stirring the maples,
Gathering the scent
Of blossoming bowers,
Ere they are spent.

Wind of the autumn!
With your sad wail,
You speak to the heart,
When man's energies fail.

You mourn with his spirit,
Entreat or lament,
His weakness, his failure,
His life, nearly spent.

But you, wind of winter,
With ice-shafts and shriek,
Shall strengthen the strong
Who shall fight for the weak.

The storm-wind fierce rushing,
With cries as of rage,
Shall brace man to action,
His soul shall engage.

In the warfare that hardens
The sinews of man,
Of mind and of body—
Divine is the plan.

Fierce or tender, ye voices
Of nature, inspire
Of truth, love, and honour
The toilers of earth.

Flame up to fulfilment
Their kindled desire,
To wrest from the future
The best it is worth.

THE GLEANING

"**W**HAT are you gathering there amid the
stooks,

Maiden with the locks that match the corn ? "

Up she arose and said with pleasant looks,

Blue-eyed, fresh, as vision of the morn,

Smiling, " It is just that I am gleaning."

" Ah, we meet again! Sweet maiden! listen,

Shall we walk together thro' the lands of life ?

On bleak downs, or where the meadows glisten

In the sunshine, so thro' calm and strife ?

Maiden! Will you have me for the gleaning ? "

Came the sweet surrender full of love and trust,

" Yes, with you thro' storm and shine I'll go."

" Ah, my love! We love because we must,

Once I thought it only, now I know."

Lip on lip they drew from love its meaning,

And two hearts were gathered for the gleaning.

I WENT TO THE HILLS

I WENT to the hills one bright day of the seven,
I went to the heights to be nearer to heaven,

For there in the loneliness, freedom, and space,
Somehow I am nearer in touch with God's grace.

O joy to my soul! The gold gate was ajar,
I heard sweetest music come floating afar.

I will write down the music, methought, and each
word,
Lest they pass, and by others be ever unheard.

With longings and tremblings my spirit was led,
But in seizing the music its melodies fled!

Kind Heaven! leave open a chink of your door,
Lest the words and the music I hear nevermore.

TIME AND ETERNITY

“ **W**HY do you work so hard? Do rest,” she cried.

“ Dear ! What the Saint Augustine once replied,
To one who bade him rest, I say to you :
I shall have all Eternity for rest.”

“ Nay then begin, obey the saint's behest,
For Time, of that great sea the lapping wave
Where we as fishers toil, our port the grave,
Is part and spending of Eternity.”

TRANSLATION FROM GOETHE

WILT shape a noble life ? Then cast
No backward glances to the past:
And what if something still be lost,
Act as new born in all thou dost.
What each day wills, that shalt thou ask,
Each day shall tell its proper task.
What others do, that must thou prize,
In thine own work thy guerdon lies.
Above all hate no man. The rest
Leave it to God. He knoweth best.

ACHIEVEMENT

THE child of six, with keen delight
And pride, cries, "I can read and write."
Should he his eightieth year attain
You yet shall hear the same refrain;
He, as of old, cries with delight,
"See, still how well I read and write."

CONFLICT

Mother.

Come down, wild girl, return ;
Where are you, where ?

Daughter.

I am on the heights exulting,
My tastes consulting,
Dull work I spurn,
Drinking in beauty, sea and sky and air.

Mother.

Come down, you do no good
With your silly exaltations ;
Come down, prepare the food,
Come shell the peas, answer the invitations.

Daughter.

I can't; why will you flout me ?
Beauty fills my soul,
Beauty is all about me,
Shell your green peas and eat them,
I'll get a penny roll.

Mother.

Even a penny roll
Someone must earn it,
You don't discern it,
Someone spend body and soul
To win the bread for life.
Labour and strife
Must wage a conflict with the things of earth:
If we work not, there's dearth.

Daughter.

Here I get recreation:
Here I am quit of bondage,
Of all vexation.
I've joined the vagabonds;
O! how my soul responds
To the great hills—the everlasting hills!
“The spirit giveth life—the law, it kills.”

Mother.

Not always:
It just keeps within the bounds,
Life that grows wild and lush
Exuberant overmuch:

Like some fair garden left neglected,
Weeds choke the flowers, grow rampant unexpected.

Come down, come down to duty,
Spite the day's grind,
Some hour for joy and beauty
And self-communing, your soul attuning,
You yet may find.

But know whene'er you shirk
Life's necessary work,
Turn back on duty,
When this you do refuse,
Your mind and heart will lose
Both joy and beauty.
Daughter! come down and help your weary
"Mooty."

Daughter.

Well, well, I will return,
O, what a bother!
I'm coming down to help you, darling
mother.

TO POLLY

I GAZE and kiss her tenderly,
Some folks would say 'twas folly,
My tried companion of long years,
My staunch, my faithful Polly!

When summer sun pours scorching rays,
She hides me from the glow,
And equally whene'er it rains,
Shields me where'er I go.

Once long ago within a cab
My faithful friend I left,
I thought I'd never see her more,
And felt as one bereft.

The honest cabman must have known
My tender melancholy,
For he returned, brought back my own,
My precious Polly.

Whene'er her brown dress shabby gets,
A new silk gown I buy her.
With silvered head and stately tread,
She moves my hand anigh her.

May she live long; her ribs are strong.
If no one steals my "brolly,"
I hope to have for all my days,
My staff, my shield, my Polly!

THE MAGIC OF SPRING

SPRING wakes up from her winter sleep,
Above brown earth the snowdrops peep,
And little lilies bathed in dew,
Whilst crocuses in flaming glory
Stand forth to tell the old, sweet story,
For ever old, for ever new.

Tho' some things ne'er can be again,
Yet growth of healing softens pain;
The rapture of the budding year
Lifts sorrow to a higher sphere,
Above distrust, complaint, or fear.

Spring in my soul floods it with glory,
Mists melt, revealing skies of blue,
Voices of old my life renew,
Whisper again the old, sweet story,
For ever new.

O magic Spring!

TRANSMUTATION

ROBIN pecks a seed
From a haw of rose,
Sings so sweet indeed,
My heart overflows.

Here my Robin lies:
Singing he was slain;
With such swift surprise,
Death was hardly pain.

Summer's here again,
From his breast there grows,
Fed by sun and rain,
A beautiful red rose.

Beauty, song, and passion
In the flower burn,
So in this sweet fashion
Robin doth return.

Thus did Death transmute
Where he seemed to slay,
And a lovelier shoot
Quickened from the clay.

THE RIVER OF LIFE

THERE'S a voice across the river
Calling, calling clear and free;
My heart's strings respond and quiver,
'Tis the one, one voice for me.

Once we met, O heavenly day!
To love's music our hearts beat;
I remained—He could not stay,
But he's calling—how to meet—

There is no bridge nor boat
To cross to yonder shore,
Not a log on which to float;
I shall never see him more.

.

Now I'm wed, and children dear
Laugh and nestle at my knee.
Happy? Yes—but loud and clear
Oft that voice is heard by me.

Up the sapphire stairs of heaven,
And within its golden wall,
If I win, will it be given
To hear that wondrous call?

Shall I meet the one apart,
He who held my soul in thrall?

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O! Husband! children! in my heart
There's room enough for all.

THE ROBIN

OH! Robin, with your merry trill
You cannot make me glad;
Rather my inmost heart you thrill,
Whose every string is sad.

And yet—you sang one autumn day—
We danced as children mad
With joy of life: I hear you say,
“ Were ever two so glad ? ”

Thoughts of my Love arise in me,
Through mists of falling tears,
And music played by memory
Evokes the joy of years.

THE GOLDEN DRINK

MEMORY in her ancient barn
Stored the golden grain of years,
Tossed in struggle, steeped in tears,
Golden drink from it I'll brew,
Then my soul shall quick renew
In rapt vision all it knew.

PAN, THE VERY DEVIL

THE devil has left the print of his hoof
On my quivering heart I thought was proof;
Or was it the print of the old god Pan,
Who knows how to torture the heart of man ?
Half a beast with a face divine,
He knows how to make your will incline.
Lord of Nature, he gives us the wine
Of the grapes of life that is poison or food,
And quickens to evil or quickens to good.
Yes—I know it was Pan, for in point of evil
Pan himself is the very devil.

PILGRIMS OF LOVE

OH Love! Lag not behind,
Nor hurry on before.
Thou hast been ever kind,
Be so once more.

On to the heights sublime,
Soon we shall reach the crest,
And win of toil and time
The prize—eternal rest.

But step by step and side by side,
Hard is the track for age to keep;
We, tired out at eventide,
See the red sunset of our life.
Pilgrims of love, we man and wife,
Loose hands and fall asleep.

LET LOOSE THE SPRING

O GOLDEN Sun, our being's light and life,
Burst into flame, and thaw the frozen earth.
Waken dumb Nature to a happy strife,
And rouse from winter's sleep the vales to life—
Let loose the Spring.

Ye clouds that float and hover in the skies,
Descend in dew, and every plant instil
With growth's desire and longing to uprise,
That so the woods their beauty may fulfil.
Let loose the Spring.

And you wild winds ! Lords of the wailing clouds,
Cease your loud blasts, and only gently woo
The tender budding greenery that enshrouds
Earth's ancient loveliness for ever drew.
Let loose the Spring.

Return, ye birds, fleet travellers, return
To those who feared no winter—win your mates;
Build up your nests and let love's sunshine burn,
And all full-throated sing at April's gates.
Let loose the Spring.

THOUGHTS ON A BIRTH

HE has joined the round of life;
Willy-nilly he must join;
Down the grooves of daily strife
He must scatter husks and grain, base and golden
coin.

Childhood, youth, maturity,
Marriage, then paternity;
Age, and then to all "Good-bye."
The round goes on without cessation,
Generation to generation.

Wherefore and why? 'Tis just we must,
We never know the reason why,
By Nature's law forced to exist,
Till Death of Life incorporate
Conducts us to the barrier gate,
And leaves us, just because he must,
Ashes and dust.

TO THE SUN

ARISE, O Sun! and drive away
The frowns of night my soul that fright;
Renew my life another day,
And with thy golden grain restore my strength.
Grant that long length.

Wake sleeping Earth, and in her being stream
The founts of Life, that she may smile and pass
Thy quickening to the grass,
And bud and furrowed clod
Burst into beauty :
Thy work, O glorious God.

Yet thou dost but obey
The Master Hand that points the ordained way,
Whom nothing can gainsay.
He holds thy power and glory.
At His command
Worlds grow beneath His hand,

And sparkle into stars in spaces vast.
The plan He cast
Nought shall dissever:
Æons to come as in the ages past,
He shall create for ever and for ever.

A LIFE'S STORY

FAR distant seas the huge ship cleaved—
The white sailed ship that sailed away;
And as I saw it leave the bay
(It bore my best beloved away),
I felt in very truth bereaved.

We said " Good-bye " the night before :—
With many a tear and sob and sigh,
And words of faith, we said " Good-bye,"
Till with dumb grief our eyes were dry
And hope nigh lost for evermore.

And then the weary years that passed
Before we two had met again—
Despairing years of lengthening pain,
Of hope deferred, of sad soul-strain,
But oh ! we met ! At last, at last !—

And we were wed ; our hearts at rest,
We two were of one mind, one soul ;
A pallid love we could not thole ;
It must be deep, it must be whole,
Before our hearts could be at rest.

Truth was his goal, his highest aim,
His soul—it glowed with purest fire,
His heart was filled with one desire,
God's spirit, he could reach no higher,
So grasped the torch of God's own flame.